This Monster Wants to Eat Me

3

Sai Naekawa

Contents

Chapter 10	Huddled Light	003
Chapter 11	Affectionate Beast	039
Chapter 12	Dividing Deep-Sea Trench	067
Intermission	The Shape of Affection	099
Chapter 13	Clear-Skied Summer and Far-Off Clouds	117
	Bonus Comic: Drifting Shadows of Summer	147
	Afterword	161

CHAPTER 10

ZA

ZA

ZA

ZA (FSSH)

ZAN

ZA

ZAN

ZA

ZAN

ZA

ZAN

—…

OKITSUNE-SAMA, YOU SAY.....?

CHAPTER
10
HUDDLED
LIGHT

HEH HEH!

YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH ANOTHER MONSTER BESIDES ME?

I'M JEALOUS AT THE THOUGHT.

.....

SHE'S 100 PERCENT A MONSTER.

...SHE'S...

...NOT REALLY A MONSTER, SO TO SPEAK...

...IN OUR NEIGHBOR-HOOD...

...THERE'S A SMALL *YASHIRO* SHRINE.

GYU (CLENCH)

MY FATHER ONCE TOLD ME THAT OKITSUNE-SAMA...

...IS THE DEITY ENSHRINED THERE—THE ONE WHO PROTECTS THIS AREA.

...

A DEITY?

I SEE.

BIKU (JOLT)

...MIKO-CHAN.

ZA (TMP)

YEAH, HINAKO ...?

...JUST NOW...

...YOU MENTIONED ...

GU (GRIP)

...A CERTAIN DAY.

YOU MEAN THE DAY MY FAMILY PAID A VISIT TO THE SHRINE, RIGHT...?

—…

……

THAT'S RIGHT.

...IN ORDER TO PRAY FOR...

...SAFETY ON THE ROAD DURING YOUR LITTLE TRIP...

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ...

...MADE A HABIT OF DROPPING BY MY PLACE.

YOU ALL VISITED ME THAT DAY TOO...

YOU MEAN—

OF COURSE.

.....

SO I WAS MORE OR LESS CORRECT WHEN I CALLED YOU A WASHED-UP LOCAL DEITY.

AFTER ALL, A MONSTER IS A MONSTER, NO MATTER HOW MUCH FAITH HUMANS PLACE IN IT.

...HINAKO'S FAMILY PERISHED NONETHELESS, THEIR PRAYERS IN VAIN.

YET...

.....!

TAKE IT EASY, SHIORI-SAN...!

NIKKOOO (GRIN)

どやー！

YOU AFFORDED THEM NO GRACE! NO BLESSING! NOTHING AT ALL!

...I CAN'T EVEN DENY IT.

OH?

I STARTED OUT AS A PLAIN OLD KITSUNE WITH A TASTE FOR HUMAN FLESH.

I ONLY STUCK AROUND THIS AREA 'COS A MONK CAPTURED ME BACK IN THE DAY...

...AND FORCED ME TO HELP OUT THE LOCAL HUMANS.

OUCH!

I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, MR. JERK!.

GON (BONK)

GESHI (WHAP)

STILL...

—I'M...

...NOT A MONSTER LIKE YOU.

I'M HERE BY CHOICE NOW.

I CHOSE TO STICK AROUND AND HELP THE HUMANS.

SO IF NOTHING ELSE...

...I HAD TO PROTECT THE ONE WHO SURVIVED...

—THE TRUTH IS...

...I DIDN'T WANT TO BE A FAILURE.

KOFF!

BUT SINCE I'M NOT ACTUALLY A DEITY...

...I COULDN'T EVEN HONOR THE SIMPLEST PRAYER.

...COME WHAT MAY.....

...I'M SORRY, HINAKO.

!

Y'KNOW, I'VE...

SORRY FOR TRICKING YOU ALL THIS TIME.

...BEEN AROUND SO MUCH LONGER THAN YOU.

I'VE KNOWN ABOUT YOU SINCE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN...

...'COS YOUR BROTHER MUTSUKI SHOWED ME A PICTURE.

EVEN YOUR PARENTS, DAICHI AND YURI—

I'VE BEEN WATCHING THOSE YOUNGSTERS SINCE THEY WERE LITTLE TOO.

AND THAT DAY...

...WHEN YOU CAME HOME ALONE...

...AND WERE FOREVER CHANGED—

.....

THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO...

...PROTECT YOU, HINAKO. NO MATTER WHAT.

I WAS WATCHING. I SAW ALL OF IT.

...!

MIKO-CHAN .....

SU (FWP)

...I'M IMPRESSED THAT A PEOPLE-EATER COULD...

...COEXIST WITH HUMANS TO THIS EXTENT.

TRULY...

KI
(GLARE)

BUT SURELY YOU'LL HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME REMAINING AT HINAKO'S SIDE GOING FORWARD, NO?

YOUR ABILITY TO REASON COULD VANISH IN A PUFF OF SMOKE AT ANY MOMENT...

...AND AS SUCH...

GA
(GRAB)

!!

KI

...I OUGHT TO SLAY YOU ON THE SPOT.

GUI (YANK)

WAIT ...!!

...!?

I'M ASKING YOU...

...TO WAIT, SHIORI-SAN.

IZUI...

HINAKO!

DON'T PLACE YOURSELF IN HARM'S WAY!

PLEASE!

.....

FINE...

.....

KOFF...

YORO (WOBBLE)

よろ...

KOFF!

KOFF!

DON'T COME CRYING TO ME WHEN SHE TAKES A BITE OUT OF YOU.

KOTSU (CLACK)

コツ

.....

HINAKO ...

THIS WHOLE TIME...

...I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALWAYS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL BECAUSE YOU WERE SICKLY.

...BUT IT WAS MY FAULT, WASN'T IT?

I'M SORRY.

—!

.....IT'S 'COS I'M...

...A PEOPLE-EATING MON-STER...

YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO BE SORRY FOR!

SO (CARESS)

...YOU'VE ALWAYS...

...BEEN THERE FOR ME, BY MY SIDE.

EVER SINCE THEN, IT HAS STRUCK ME AS STRANGE—

KEEPING ME...

SO I THINK...

...FOR SURE...

HOW, AFTER MY FAMILY WAS GONE...

...WHEN I FELT LIKE I WAS SINKING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA EVERY DAY...

...MIKO-CHAN ALONE WAS GLIMMERING ABOVE THE WATER'S SURFACE, LIKE THE SUN.

...FROM SINKING ALL THE WAY DOWN.

...I CAN CALL YOU MY FRIEND.

EVEN IF YOU ONLY THINK THAT...

...'COS OF WHAT MY MAGIC DID TO YOU?

—...

THAT'S STILL...

...FINE BY ME.

.....

HAAH, I SWEAR ...

HINAKO, THIS IS WHY...

...YOU GET TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BY NASTY, VICIOUS MONSTERS.

MIKO-
AN?

BUTSU
(CHOMP)

This Monster Wants to Eat Me

This Monster Wants to Eat Me

CHAPTER 11

—EVEN IF...

...YOU'RE MORE MONSTER THAN HUMAN...

...NONETHELESS...

HINAKO...!!

...I CONSIDER YOU...

...MY...

CHAPTER
11

Affectionate Beast

ZA
ZAN
ZA
(FSSH)
ZA
ZA
ZAN
……?
POTA
(DRIP)
ZA
ZA
—…

POTA

POTA

ZURU (LOOM)

GOSHI (RUB)

SHE BIT OFF A PAIR OF HER TAILS? BUT THAT'S WHERE HER BEASTLY POWER IS STORED...

ZU (ZWSH)

—I SHOULD'VE DONE THAT A LONG TIME AGO.

YORO (WOBBLE)

I'M A BIG IDIOT, AREN'T I?

GUESS I HAD A HARD TIME SAYING GOODBYE TO MY STATUS AND POWER.

MIKO-CHAN...

JUST NOW, WHAT DID YOU...?

SHE ABANDONED TWO TAILS' WORTH OF BEASTLY POWER.

GUI (TUG)

A KITSUNE'S TAILS SYMBOLIZE ITS RELATIVE STATUS AS A MONSTER...

SHE...

...GAVE THAT UP?

.....

TO DELIBERATELY BITE OFF THOSE VERY TAILS...

I SUPPOSE YOU'VE GONE QUITE MAD?

.....

I'M WILLING TO GIVE UP MY STATUS AS A MONSTER...

...AND LOSE THE CENTURIES' WORTH OF POWER I'VE BUILT UP...

.....

YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND —NOT IN A THOUSAND YEARS.

ZA (FSSH)

ZAN

...'COS I WANNA BE BY THIS HUMAN'S SIDE.

...HINAKO.

—THIS TIME AS THE MIKO YASHIRO YOU KNOW.

I WANNA...

...BECOME FRIENDS WITH YOU AGAIN...

ZAAA (FSSH)

—...

SU (SHP)

—EVEN IF...

...SHE'S NOT HUMAN...

EVEN IF IT WAS ALL SOMEHOW JUST A DECEPTION—

NONETHELESS...

!

MIKO-
CHAN...

...YOU'RE MY DEAR FRIEND.

"HIC"?

HIC...

GURI

UH-HUH.

I LOVE YOU!

GURI

UH-HUH.

LOVE, I SAY!!

GURI

HINAKO... LET'S BE THERE FOR EACH OTHER FROM NOW ON!!

GURI (NUZZLE)

HIC... HIC...WE'RE GONNA BE BEST FRIENDS FOREVER— I JUST KNOW IT!

DOBA (GUSH)

BIKU (JOLT)

WAA-AAA-AAH!

ZA (FSSH)

ZA

WAAAH!

ZA

ZA

ZAN

—...

...I SUPPOSE THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE.

AFTER LOSING THAT MUCH BEASTLY POWER...

...IT SEEMS YOUR DIVINITY HAS INCREASED, ALLOWING YOU TO RESIST THE SCENT OF HINAKO'S BLOOD.

SAY WHAT?

I'LL OVERLOOK YOUR ACTIONS TODAY, OUT OF RESPECT FOR HINAKO.

ぴょこっ

PYOKO (PWOP)

WHAT'RE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT, YOU HALF-FISH FREAK?

I'M LETTING YOU LIVE JUST IN CASE HINAKO EVER NEEDS A BODYGUARD SOMEPLACE WHERE MY OWN POWER DOESN'T REACH.

A HALF-FISH LIKE YOU MIGHT BE WEAKER ON LAND, BUT NOT SO WEAK THAT YOU'RE ABOUT TO DRY OUT AND TURN TO JERKY OVERNIGHT.

AND I'M MAKING A MENTAL NOTE OF THAT.

TEE HEE!

NOT "HALF" ANYTHING. THAT'S FULL MERMAID, TO YOU.

.....

DON'T YOU DARE SAY MY NAME LIKE THAT!!!!!!!

WON'T YOU, MIKO?

AND HONESTLY, JUST CALL ME SHIORI.

ZA (FSSH) ZA

ZA ZAN

—SEE YA LATER, HINAKO...

...MIKO-CHAN...

I WILL.

NIGHTY-NIGHT!

BE SURE TO PATCH UP THOSE SCRAPES, 'KAY?

...I'LL SEE YOU...

...TO-MORROW, THEN.

...YOU SURE WILL!

WHAT'RE YOU LURKING AROUND FOR?

GASHAN (CLANG)

.....
SO?

...AND? YOU THINK I MIGHT ATTACK HINAKO OR SOMETHING?

BECAUSE YOU STILL HAVE FOUR TAILS REMAINING, OF COURSE.

...I'LL SNACK ON A NEARBY FISH INSTEAD OF HINAKO.

'COS IF I EVER GET SO HUNGRY THAT I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE...

WELL, RELAX.

ZA ZA ザザ…

—TO BE QUITE FRANK...

ZA (FSSHD) ザ ZAN ザーン…

...IT'S A WONDER THIS HAS GONE ON FOR SO LONG.

AH! I'M SORRY, YOU MUST BE CONFUSED.

I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT YOU, CLEVER PUPPY.

I MEANT IT'S A WONDER HINAKO HAS LIVED THIS LONG, YUMMY AS SHE IS.

…

むかー

MUKAAA (IRK)

YEAH, WELL, I CAN THINK RATIONALLY, UNLIKE YOU.

IMAGINE IF THE FAMILY HAD BEEN ATTACKED BY A MONSTER WHILE ON THEIR LITTLE TRIP...

IT'S ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT...NONE OF THEM WOULD HAVE RETURNED ALIVE.

I SUPPOSE YOUR OBSESSION WITH HER DEVELOPED AFTER THE ACCIDENT?

THAT'D ONLY BE IF...

...HINAKO HAD ALWAYS BEEN *THE WAY SHE IS NOW.*

—...

ZA (FSSH)

ZAN

SO, NAH, I DIDN'T WORRY ABOUT THAT...

...AT ALL BACK THEN.

.....?

ZA

ZA

—WHEN HINAKO WAS LITTLE...

GYU (SQUEEZE)

...SHE NEVER GOT ATTACKED BY MONSTERS— NOT ONCE.

ZA

ZAN

'COS...

ZA

ZAN

...HER FLESH AND BLOOD...

...DIDN'T START SMELLING SO DELICIOUS TO US MONSTERS...

ZA

ZA

ZA

...UNTIL AFTER THE ACCIDENT.

AWWW!
AWW, AWW, AWW!

CHAPTER 12

AHEM! SOOO!

LET'S TOAST TO US BEING FRIENDS AGAIN, HINAKO!

CH...

CHEERS ...?

ANY FRIEND OF HINAKO'S IS A FRIEND OF MINE.

SO NOT TRUE!!

GYAAA (YAP)

GYAAA

HUH?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

NOBODY INVITED YOU.

CHAPTER
12
DIVIDING
DEEP-SEA
TRENCH

.....YOU TWO...

...SEEM PRETTY COZY WITH EACH OTHER.

UGH! I WANTED A LITTLE PARTY WITH JUST THE TWO OF US! NOT WITH HER!

DOSSARI (FWUMP)
どっさり

THAT'S WHY I BOUGHT A BUNCH OF YOUR FAVORITE SNACKS!

EVEN THE NEWEST PUDDING!

ゴソ

SFX: GOSO (RUSTLE) GASA (RUMMAGE)

AS IF!!

IN-DEED WE ARE.

COZY!? IN YOUR DREAMS!!

THERE'S A WHOLE 'NOTHER BAG IN THE CLASSROOM!

YOU BOUGHT ALL THIS?

I THINK YOU WENT A LITTLE OVERBOARD...

AWW...

BASASA (FLAP)

ZA (FSSHD)

ZA

—...

—YOU'RE CLAIMING HER FLESH DIDN'T CHANGE UNTIL AFTER THE ACCIDENT...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

.....

EXACTLY WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE.

THE FIRST TIME SHE GOT ATTACKED BY A MONSTER...

...WAS SHORTLY AFTER SHE GOT OUT OF THE HOSPITAL.

...SORRY, MIKO-CHAN.

ARE YOU OKAY!?

...

HINAKO!

I MUST'VE SLIPPED AND FALLEN.

HUH ...?

...IRONIC, ISN'T IT?

IT WAS ONLY 'COS OF THAT LITTLE INCIDENT THAT I EVEN NOTICED IT—

MIKO-CHAN?

WHAT'S WRONG?

MIKO-CHAN?

THE CHANGE TO HER BODY.

'COS VICIOUS BRUTES LIKE YOU STARTED SHOWING UP IN DROVES, UNINVITED—

AND THAT'S WHEN THE TROUBLE STARTED.

EVEN THOUGH THIS WHOLE AREA IS MY TERRITORY...

...I HAVEN'T HAD TO DEAL WITH MORE THAN A BAKE-DANUKI OR TWO IN THE PAST COUPLE OF CENTURIES.

...I SEE.

IT'S CERTAINLY RARE, BUT NOT IMPOSSIBLE.

FOR AN OTHERWISE ORDINARY HUMAN, LIKE HINAKO...

...TO UNDERGO A SUDDEN TRANSFORMATION, AFTER A JOURNEY OF SORTS.

...TO THIS DAY, I DUNNO EXACTLY WHY HER BODY...

...CHANGED THE WAY IT DID.

HER SCENT GROWS STRONGER YEAR BY YEAR...

...AND I'VE HAD TO TEAR APART EVERY BEASTIE HOPING TO MAKE A MEAL OUTTA HER.

.....AND YET...

DO YOU MEAN...

...THE TRUTH IS...

...I'VE BARELY BEEN HOLDING IT TOGETHER THESE PAST FEW YEARS.

OR YOUR APPETITE?

...IN TERMS OF YOUR STRENGTH?

.....

...YOU'RE SERIOUSLY THE WORST.

...BUT...

...IN A WAY, I'M ALSO GRATEFUL TO YOU.

IF I'D STUCK TO MY MONSTROUS SIDE...

ZA (FSSH)

ZA

...WHO KNOWS WHEN I WOULD'VE DONE SOMETHING I COULDN'T COME BACK FROM?

BUT BY RIPPING OFF SOME OF MY TAILS WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT...

...I'VE MADE PROTECTING HINAKO AND THE OTHER FOLKS AROUND HERE MUCH HARDER ON MYSELF.

...AND?

WHY IS A STARVING PET DOG...

...GRATEFUL TO LITTLE OLD ME?

—'COS GOING FORWARD...

...I'M GONNA PUT YOU TO WORK.

SINCE YOU SAY YOU'RE HERE TO PROTECT HINAKO...

...BACK IT UP BY PUTTING YOUR OWN LIFE ON THE LINE TO KEEP HER ALIVE.

NO MATTER WHAT KINDS OF HORRIBLE MONSTERS SHOW UP, DON'T LET THEM LAY A SINGLE FINGER ON HER...

...UNTIL THE DAY YOU TURN YOUR OWN FANGS ON HER COMES.

FOR HER SAKE...

...I'LL EXPLOIT YOU FOR ALL YOU'RE WORTH.

.....YOU'RE REALLY ONLY TALKING ABOUT YOUR OWN SELFISH ENDS, AREN'T YOU?

ZA (FSSH)

ZA

I'LL PROTECT HINAKO REGARDLESS OF YOUR REQUEST.

ZA

ZAN

AND IN TURN, I INTEND TO EXPLOIT YOUR PRESENCE AS BEST I CAN AS WELL.

BUT...

...I'M ALL IN FAVOR OF US MONSTERS ACTING IN OUR OWN SELF-INTEREST.

IN FACT, I WOULD SAY OUR INTERESTS ARE ENTIRELY ALIGNED.

UNTIL THAT DAY COMES...

...WE OUGHT TO GET ALONG, NO?

.....

IN YOUR DREAMS.

OPEN UP!

YOU TRY IT TOO, HINAKO!

MM! THIS ONE'S TASTY!

PAKU (NOM)

120 ¥

ERM...

I CAN FEED MYSELF, THANKS...

SAY "AAH"!

...I WAS RIGHT TO SPARE THE KITSUNE'S LIFE AFTER ALL.

...THEN THE KITSUNE WILL MAKE HERSELF USEFUL—EVEN IF ONLY AS EMOTIONAL NOURISHMENT TO KEEP HINAKO IN THE WORLD OF THE LIVING.

MMF!

OPEN WIDE.

MONSTER OR NOT, SO LONG AS HINAKO REGARDS THAT ONE AS A FRIEND, JUST AS SHE ALWAYS HAS...

AAAH!!

LIKE A BUOY TO KEEP HER AFLOAT, ONE MIGHT SAY.

"WHAT'S UP," SHE SAYS...

WANT A SNACK?

NO THANKS.

HUH?

WHAT'S UP?

TA (TMP)

TA

UGH!

YOU WERE HERE THIS WHOLE TIME, MIKO!?

I WAS LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!!

I TOLD YOU THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE WAS MEETING AT LUNCH TODAY...

ACK.

C'MON!

OKAY...

GOOD LUCK...

STUFF YOUR FACE WITH THOSE SNACKS, OKAY?

SORRY, HINAKO! I GOTTA GO!

TAKANO-SENSEI (A.K.A. TAKA-SEN) IS SUPER STRICT.

GAAH!

YIKES! MY BAD! TOTALLY SLIPPED MY MIND!!

TAKA-SEN IS SUPER PISSED...

DOES SHE EVER TURN DOWN THE VOLUME?

BACHI (GLARE)

FARE-WELL.

ZURU

ZURU (DRAG)

SORRY ABOUT HER, OUMI-SAN!

WHOA...! QUIT YELLING AT THE TRANSFER STUDENT!

DON'T YOU GET ANY CLOSER TO HINAKO, GOT IT!?

NOT ONE MILLIMETER, OKAY!?

NO TIME TO LOSE! LET'S GO!

.....

ALL RIGHT, COME ON!

SHE'S GONE...

INDEED.

THAT BOISTEROUS ONE'S REALLY ON THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE?

MIKO-CHAN IS ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN A LOT OF STUFF.

LOVES TO HELP OUT

SHE'LL TAKE ON ANY JOB OR TASK WHEN ASKED...

THAT SOMEHOW MAKES PERFECT SENSE.

HEH HEH!

...I'M REALLY GLAD...

ARE YOU BEING SERIOUS?

.....DID IT SEEM THAT WAY?

YEAH.

...THAT YOU TWO ARE GETTING ALONG.

FOR MY PART...

...I'M IMPRESSED THAT YOU'RE STILL FRIENDS WITH HER, NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHAT SHE IS.

I FEEL BETTER KNOWING THAT MIKO-CHAN'S A MONSTER.

OUR TIME TOGETHER IS LIKE A BRIEF MOMENT FOR HER, ISN'T IT?

AND I BET THAT MIKO-CHAN...

...HAS PLENTY OF OTHER PEOPLE WHO MATTER TO HER.

...SHE WON'T END UP ALONE, RIGHT?

...EVEN WHEN I'M DEAD AND GONE...

WHICH MEANS...

—...

...I HAVE MY DOUBTS, ACTUALLY.

MM-HM.

THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TWO TO GET ALONG...

GIVEN THE WAY SHE SNAPPED AT ME, SHE DOES SEEM RATHER SUSCEPTIBLE TO LONELINESS.

HINA—

...EVEN AFTER I'VE BEEN EATEN UP.

MIKO-CHAN'S PHONE...

BUITSU (BOOP)

12:34

1 Missed Call
080 XXX XXX

SHE FORGOT IT WHEN SHE RAN OFF.

...OFF YOU GO, THEN.

I'LL GO BRING IT TO HER.

.....

YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT MONSTERS DON'T GET LONELY...?

NO MATTER THE ERA...

...HUMANS ARE SO BAFFLING.

#11

ZAA (WHOOSH)

.....
HONESTLY.

...AND PINCH-HITTING FOR THE BASKETBALL AND TENNIS CLUBS (NOT FORMALLY IN ANY CLUB).
CURRENTLY ON THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE, ANNOUNCEMENTS COMMITTEE, HEALTH COMMITTEE...
TOO MUCH GOING ON!!

GYM UNIFORM

SINCE THERE ARE NO SCENES DURING GYM CLASS IN THE STORY, THERE WAS NO OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW OFF THESE OUTFITS.
THEY ARE THE SAME NAVY BLUE AS THE STANDARD SCHOOL UNIFORMS, WITH A WHITE STRIPE ON THE BOTTOMS.

INTERMISSION

The Shape of Affection

I ONLY HAVE...

...A SINGLE REGRET.

AFTER MY FAMILY WAS GONE...

...WHEN I FELT LIKE I WAS SINKING...

...TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA EVERY DAY...

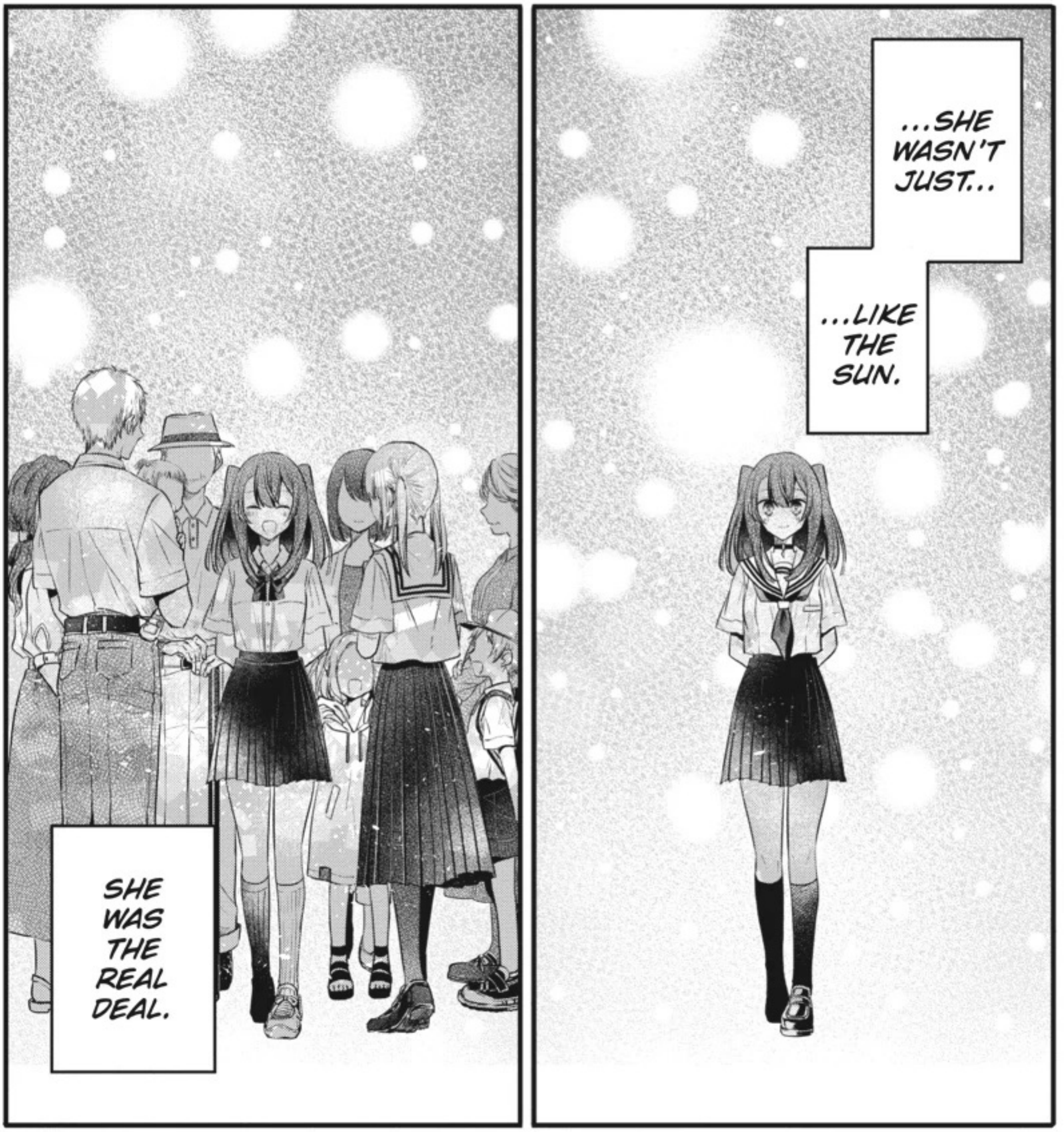
HINAKO!

...MIKO-CHAN ALONE...

...WAS GLIMMERING ABOVE THE WATER'S SURFACE, LIKE THE SUN—

KEEPING ME FROM SINKING ALL THE WAY DOWN.

BUT...


...SHE WASN'T JUST...
...LIKE THE SUN.
SHE WAS THE REAL DEAL.

THANKS, YOU'RE A LIFESAVER, MIKO!

SURE, I CAN HELP!

HER WARMTH...

...AND THE LIGHT RADIATING FROM HER...

HEY!! THE CROSSING LIGHT'S STILL RED!!

I HOPE YOU'RE STAYING HYDRATED, CHIZU-CHAN?

SURE AM!

HEADING HOME, MIKO-CHAN?

...WAS DIRECTED NOT JUST AT ME, BUT EVERYONE ELSE TOO.

I'M SURE OUR TIME TOGETHER IS...

...ONLY THE BLINK OF AN EYE...

...TO SOMEONE AS LONG-LIVED AS HER.

WHEN I THINK ABOUT THAT...

...SO RELIEVED.

...I FEEL...

I DON'T WANT HER TO GRIEVE WHEN I'M GONE.

RUN, RUN!

HUH !?

SHE'S GOT PLENTY OF PEOPLE SHE CARES ABOUT IN HER LIFE.

AND NOW, SHE'S GOT SOMEONE WHO'LL LIVE AS LONG AS HER TOO.

—MY WISH...

...IS FOR HER TO KEEP SMILING FOREVER.

HUMAN OR NOT...

...SHE'S KINDER THAN ANYONE.

AND SHE'S...

...MY DEAREST FRIEND.

Sunny
*IN HER MIND
YUM

DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

Q: CAN SHE SWIM?

CAN'T SWIM (OR SO SHE CLAIMS). (IN TRUTH, SHE CAN, MORE OR LESS)

CAN SWIM. (SLOW, BUT HAS ENDLESS STAMINA)

CAN SWIM. (AS WELL AS AN ORCA)

Q: IS SHE A MORNING PERSON?

NOT REALLY... (LOW BLOOD PRESSURE, CLEARLY)

VERY MUCH SO. (THE TYPE TO EAT CURRY FOR BREAKFAST)

NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHETHER SHE EVEN SLEEPS.

CHAPTER 13

伊予市駅
IYOSHI STATION

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

MIIIN

10
52

HINAKO.

IS THAT SO?

DON'T WORRY.

NO. I ONLY JUST GOT HERE TOO.

THANK GOODNESS FOR THE LOVELY WEATHER.

HOPE YOU WEREN'T WAITING LONG!

MIIIN

MIIIN (BUZZ)

WELL?

SHALL WE GET GOING?

MIIIN

MIN

MIIIIN

SIGN: WATCH YOUR STEP WHEN GETTING OFF.

CHAPTER 13

Clear-Skied Summer and Far-Off Clouds

THE BEACH?

IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, YOU HAVEN'T GONE OUT FOR FUN SINCE THE FESTIVAL, RIGHT?

YES!

WHY NOT STRETCH YOUR LEGS...

...WITH A DAY OF SWIMMING AT THE SHORE?

I CAN'T SWIM, ACTUALLY.

.....

.....

GYU (CLENCH)

ぎゅ…

I DUNNO ABOUT THAT...

BUT_

GUI (NUDGE)

GUI

GUI

THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF FUN TO BE HAD SPLASHING IN THE SHALLOWS.

ERM...

SUMMER COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR, AND YOU SIMPLY MUST TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SEASON.

NU (LOOM)

AND BELIEVE IT OR NOT, I'M QUITE THE SIGHT WHEN I'VE STRIPPED ALL THE WAY DOWN.

QUITE A NASTY SIGHT WITH YOUR HUMAN-ISH SKIN STRIPPED OFF, I BET! HALF-FISH FREAK.

...BUT JAPANESE MERMAIDS ARE **DISGUSTING, CREEPY, AND OMINOUS.** TOTAL TRIPLE THREATS THAT MAKE YOU WANNA CLAW YOUR EYES OUT.

WHILE YOU ARE, HM... **MALODOROUS, HIRSUTE, AND OVERZEALOUS.** HOW'S THAT FOR THREE INSULTS?

TAKE THAT BACK!!

DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE SKIN SHE'S WEARING NOW, 'KAY?

WESTERN MERMAIDS ARE ONE THING...

...COME TO THINK OF IT...

I WONDER WHAT SHIORI-SAN'S TRUE FORM LOOKS LIKE?

I COULDN'T QUITE MAKE HER OUT THROUGH THE EVENING SHADOWS—

TRY TO GET ALONG... PLEASE?

UM...

.....

.....

WAAAH!

!

HINAKO!! THE HALF-FISH IS BULLYING MEEE!!

.....

I—

BUT...

LOOK AT HER! SHE'S TOTALLY NOT INTO THE IDEA.

.....

HMM...

I DON'T REALLY SEE IT.

LISTEN, HALF-FISH.

HINAKO'S FEELING AWKWARD 'COS OF YOUR WEIRD INVITE TO HANG OUT.

OH? SO THIS IS MY FAULT?

OH?

...HUH?

...I AGREE THAT YOU SHOULD GET OUT AND HAVE SOME FUN.

NOTHING OUTTA YOUR COMFORT ZONE, OF COURSE.

.....

BUT FOR SOMEONE LIVING BY THE SHORE...

...YOU REALLY DON'T VISIT THE BEACH MUCH, HUH?

THESE DAYS, BEACHES ARE FULL OF SOUVENIR SHOPS AND CAFÉS AND STUFF.

SEE?

COULD BE TONS OF FUN, EVEN IF YOU DON'T SWIM. DON'CHA THINK?

.....

I GUESS...

.....

BUT...

THE THING IS...

FOR SURE!

YOU'LL HAVE A BLAST!

.....

HUH...!?

ZUUUN (GLOOOM)

...I CAN'T GO WITH YOU.....

SNIFF SNIFF

MESO MESO MESO (SOB)

WITH TWO TAILS GONE...

...I SUPPOSE IT'S MORE OF A HURDLE FOR HER TO LEAVE HER DOMAIN...

TOO MANY ERRANDS TO RUN, MIKO-CHAN?

NAH... I HAVE MY REASONS...

IS SHE CHARMING OR JUST EASY TO CHARM?

NOT THAT SHE TRUSTS ME ENTIRELY, I SUPPOSE.

YET, FOR THE SAKE OF HINAKO'S HAPPINESS, SHE'S WILLING TO CEDE SOME CONTROL TO ME, HER RIVAL.

YOUR AUNT GAVE YOU PERMIS-SION...

...RIGHT?

ZUMUN (FWUMP)

WELL! AT LEAST IT'S EASY ENOUGH FOR ME TO EXPLOIT HER!

HINAKO!

!!

—...

DON'T WORRY, HINAKO!

ON THE OFF-CHANCE SHE LOSES CONTROL AND GOES AFTER YOU...

...I'LL COME SWOOPING IN TO FIGHT HER OFF!

OH? YOU CAN FLY?

IT'S A TURN OF PHRASE, GEEZ!!

WHOA!

GET OFFA ME!!

BA (BAM)

HEH...

.....

OKAY.....

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

LET'S GET A MOVE ON, SHALL WE?

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

JI (BZ)

JI

JI

JI

JI

—HINAKO?

AH!

...RIGHT.

THIS ISN'T THE SCENERY I'M USED TO.

THE VIVID CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TREES AND THE SKY...

—AND...

...IT'S PAINFULLY DAZZLING, THE—

THIS IS CERTAINLY A LOVELY SPOT.

THERE ARE SO MANY SHOPS, JUST AS MIKO CLAIMED.

RIGHT, HINA—

WE'LL SURELY ENJOY OURSELVES WHETHER WE TAKE A DIP IN THE WATER OR NOT!

HFF...

HFF...

.....

MOOOM! HE'S BEING MEAN!

AHA HA HA HA!

HEY, WAIT UP!

GYUU (CLENCH)

ギュッ…

HFF...

GO AHEAD AND WEAR THAT.

POSLN (FWMP)

ぴと

ス

ン

！

.....

I UNDERSTAND THAT SOME AMOUNT OF SUN EXPOSURE IS VITAL FOR YOU HUMANS...

...BUT THERE'S NO SENSE IN BURNING YOUR EYES WITH SUCH RADIANCE...

...BEFORE YOU'VE GROWN ACCUSTOMED TO THE BRIGHTNESS. SO MAKE USE OF THE SHADE, OKAY?

KUI (TUG)

UNTIL THE DAY YOU CAN ONCE AGAIN STROLL ABOUT UNDER THE SUN WITH A SMILE ON YOUR FACE...

HEH HEH! AT ANY RATE...

...IS IT TOO EARLY FOR A BITE TO EAT?

THERE ARE PLENTY OF UNUSUAL OFFERINGS HERE.

...SURE.

...ALLOW ME TO PROVIDE THE SHADE YOU NEED.

HERE YOU GO, HINAKO.

SHE'S A FREQUENT SNACKER, HUH...?

OH, IT'S SO TASTY!

TWO FOR ME, THEN.

OH? ARE YOU FULL ALREADY?

HUH...

MORE FOOD AGAIN...?

KYAA (SQUEE)

KYAA

ZA (FSSH)

ZAN

ZA

ZAN

...SHIORI-SAN.

I'M SORRY I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO SWIM...

...AFTER YOU BROUGHT ME TO A BEACH MEANT FOR SWIMMING...

YOU'RE ON THE SECOND CONE ALREADY?

OH... OKAY...

THAT'S CLEAR ENOUGH, I GUESS...

SU (SHF)

HUH?

I'M SATISFIED ALREADY, SWIMMING OR NOT...

NO NEED TO TROUBLE YOURSELF, REALLY.

BECAUSE WHAT TRULY CONCERNS ME...

...IS WHETHER YOU'RE HAVING EVEN JUST A LITTLE BIT OF FUN.

.....

YUM. ALL DONE.

KUSHA (CRUMPLE)

...BESIDES, IT LOOKS LIKE...

HUH ...?

...WE'RE IN FOR SOME RAIN.

GORO (RUMBLE)

GORO

NO... IT'S RAIN-ING?

POTSU (P.LIP)

LET'S GET OUR STUFF OUTTA THE RAIN!

POTSU

ポラ PARA (SSH)

PARA ポラ

THE SKY WAS CLEAR JUST A MINUTE AGO...

SHOULD WE TAKE COVER SOMEWHERE ...?

...SHIORI-SAN?

I'M ONLY LAMENTING OUR BAD LUCK.

OH, YEAH...

THE WEATHER REPORT CALLED FOR NOTHING BUT SUN ALL DAY.

...IS SOME-THING WRONG?

OH NO.

ZA

ZA

ZA

...THERE'S SO MUCH COMING BETWEEN US.

TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 4

TRULY...

ZA (FSSH)

ZA

ANSWER:
IT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH.

Translation Notes

GENERAL

-san: The Japanese equivalent of Mr./Mrs./Miss. If a situation calls for politeness, this is the fail-safe honorific.

-chan: An affectionate honorific indicating familiarity used mostly in reference to girls; also used in reference to cute persons or animals regardless of gender.

-senpai: Used to address more senior classmates, teammates, and coworkers.

Page 7

Miko's human name—Miko Yashiro—is a reference to the word for Shinto shrines in Japanese, *yashiro*.

Page 15

In Japanese folklore, *kitsune* are fox spirits known for being dangerous tricksters with the power to shape-shift into human forms. They can have as many as nine tails, and the more tails a *kitsune* has, the older and more powerful it is.

Page 76

Tanuki are also known as Japanese raccoon dogs. They appear in Japanese folklore as *bake-danuki*, a category of supernatural beings similar to *kitsune*, with shape-shifting abilities and humorous, trickster personalities.

Page 122

Mermaids in Japanese tradition are often grotesque creatures, sometimes depicted as more fish than human, unlike Western mermaids.

← THIS IS A ONE-SHOT VERSION OF *MONSTEAT* THAT RAN IN *AOKISHI* MAGAZINE.

A BIT MORE LIVELY THAN IN THE LONG-RUNNING SERIES.

A BIT MORE UNSETTLING THAN IN THE LONG-RUNNING SERIES.

BONUS COMIC

DRIFTING SHADOWS OF SUMMER

OH YEAH. IT'S FULL OF WEEDS AND SLIME, RIGHT?

THAT'S THE ONE!

BYUU (WHOOSH)

ANYWAY, MY SENPAI FROM THE VOLLEYBALL CLUB TOLD ME THAT IF...

...YOU GO NEAR THE POOL ALONE AROUND DUSK, YOU'LL BUMP INTO...

HEY, YOU KNOW HOW BEHIND THE GYM...

...THERE'S THAT OLD POOL NOBODY USES ANYMORE?

...A GHOST THAT EATS PEOPLE.

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

.....

OH GREAT. IT'S PROBABLY IN THE POOL NOW...

MIIIN

JI (BZ)

JI

JI

JI

立入禁止

PRETTY SURE THAT PAPER FELL AROUND HERE...

SIGN: DO NOT ENTER

POTA

MIIIN

MIIIN

POTA (DRIP)

MIIIN

.....

ZA (TMP)

PA (FWD)

Ko

WHAT ARE YOU DOING BACK HERE...

...HINAKO?

HOPING TO GET IN SOME SWIMMING PRACTICE?

—...

WHEN DID SHE TELL ME THAT ...?

I HAVE A HARD TIME PICTURING IT...

I'M FEEDING THE KOI IN THE POOL, OF COURSE.

...I COULD ASK YOU THE SAME THING, SHIORI-SAN.

DIDN'T I TELL YOU I JOINED THE PET-KEEPING CLUB RECENTLY?

THE WIND BLEW AWAY ONE OF MY PAPERS...

...AND I THINK IT FELL IN THIS AREA...

EITHER WAY...

...I STRONGLY ADVISE YOU NOT TO WANDER AROUND ALONE ***HERE, AT THIS HOUR.***

BICHOO (SOAKED) びちょ

YEAH...

PERHAPS?

...THIS ONE.....?

.....

YOU'RE BETTER OFF ASKING THE TEACHER FOR A NEW PRINTOUT, HONESTLY.

GUESS SO.....

?

IS THERE SOME-THING ELSE?

DOES THE PEOPLE-EATING GHOST...

.....

...REALLY EXIST?

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT YOU WERE HOPING TO FIND...

...BUT YOU REALLY OUGHT TO GO AND GET YOUR PRINTOUT REPLACED.

THAT'S TRUE...

HOW ON EARTH WOULD A GHOST CONSUME PEOPLE?

OH...

.....
YEAH.

I'LL DO THAT.

MMHM.

BYE, SHIORI-SAN.

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR CLUB DUTIES.

KURU (SPIN)

TAKE CARE, NOW.

MIIIN

MIIIN (BUZZ)

MIIIN

ZURU (SLINK)

SOMETHING THAT INSUB-STANTIAL CAN DO NO HARM AT ALL.

ZU (SLP)

A GHOST IS MERELY WHAT BECOMES OF A HUMAN IN THE END.

BUT EATING PEOPLE...

ZURU

—A GHOST?

...IS SOLELY THE DOMAIN...

...OF MONSTERS.

FOR YOU SEE, HINAKO ALREADY HAS A DATE WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

PAK! (KRK)

—REMEMBER THE STORY ABOUT THE PEOPLE-EATING GHOST?

TH...

THAT HUMAN ...

GIVE HER...

...TO ME...

I'M AFRAID I CAN'T ALLOW THAT.

THE HUMAN ...

OH YEAH!

I HEARD THAT IT...

...GOT GOBBLED UP BY THE FLESH-EATING MERMAID THAT LIVES IN THE POOL!

AH HA HA!

A MERMAID IN A POOL? MAKES NO SENSE!

MIKO'S PLOTLINE (WHICH STARTED IN VOLUME 2) IS MORE OR LESS RESOLVED FOR NOW.

(I FEEL LIKE A NUMBER OF READERS WERE GENUINELY WORRIED ABOUT MIKO'S FATE AROUND CHAPTER 10...)

SORRY TO WORRY YOU LIKE THAT.

THANK YOU FOR PICKING UP VOLUME 3 OF MONSTEAT!

MOAI STATUE (?) BEHIND THE SYMBOL OF LOVE

ZAAA (FSSHH) !!!

THE INSPIRATION WAS A REAL-LIFE REST STOP BUILT BY A BEACH MADE FOR SWIMMING.

(I VISITED THIS PLACE OFTEN AS A KID, BUT WE ALWAYS WENT BY CAR. THIS WAS MY FIRST TIME GOING BY TRAIN.)

IS THAT GOOD LUCK? OR BAD?

COINCIDENTALLY, I EXPERIENCED CLEAR SKIES FOLLOW BY A DOWNPOUR OF RAIN, JUST LIKE IN CHAPTER 13...

CUTE HAT-WEARING PUFFER FISH HANGING FROM THE CEILING

CLOSEST STATION

IN ORDER TO DO RESEARCH FOR CHAPTER 13, I TOOK MY FIRST ACTUAL EXCURSION IN A WHILE.

LONG TIME SINCE I RODE ON A TRAIN.

CONDUCTOR-LESS TRAIN (DRIVER ONLY) + STATION WITH NO EMPLOYEES

SPECIAL THANKS!!

· KAMEMARU-SAN, MY EDITOR · MY DESIGNER, SALIDAS CO.'S SHOJI-SAN · EHIME PREFECTURE'S IYO AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL, FOR PROVIDING VISUAL REFERENCE FOR THE SCHOOL · SHINO-SENSEI · MY FAMILY · MY FRIENDS · YOU READERS!

I HOPE YOU KEEP ENJOYING MONSTEAT!

–Sai Naekawa

I THINK ONCE THINGS AROUND THE WORLD SETTLE DOWN, I'D LIKE TO VISIT A NUMBER OF PLACES FOR LOCATION RESEARCH.

CHECK OUT THE OFFICIAL VIDEO AD FOR THE SERIES TOO!!

This Monster Wants to Eat Me 3

Sai Naekawa

Translation:
CALEB COOK

Lettering:
BIANCA PISTILLO

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

WATASHI O TABETAI, HITODENASHI Vol.3
©Sai Naekawa 2021
First published in Japan in 2021 by KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo.
English translation rights arranged with KADOKAWA CORPORATION, Tokyo through TUTTLE-MORI AGENCY, INC., Tokyo.

English translation © 2025 by Yen Press, LLC

Yen Press, LLC supports the right to free expression and the value of copyright. The purpose of copyright is to encourage writers and artists to produce the creative works that enrich our culture.

The scanning, uploading, and distribution of this book without permission is a theft of the author's intellectual property. If you would like permission to use material from the book (other than for review purposes), please contact the publisher. Thank you for your support of the author's rights.

Yen Press
150 West 30th Street, 6th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Visit us at yenpress.com
facebook.com/yenpress
twitter.com/yenpress
yenpress.tumblr.com
instagram.com/yenpress

First Yen Press Edition: January 2025
Edited by Yen Press Editorial: Rebecca Fang, Danielle Niederkorn
Designed by Yen Press Design: Wendy Chan

Yen Press is an imprint of Yen Press, LLC.
The Yen Press name and logo are trademarks of Yen Press, LLC.

The publisher is not responsible for websites (or their content) that are not owned by the publisher.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024933529

ISBNs: 978-1-9753-9052-5 (paperback)
978-1-9753-9053-2 (ebook)

$PrintCode

LSC-C

Printed in the United States of America